

River Run

Story and Photos by
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The Challenge:

A construction platoon from Company A, 94th Engineer Battalion, from Vilseck, Germany, needed two 40-ton cranes at a construction site to keep their project on schedule. Co. A was building a warehouse for the 123rd Main Support Bn. in Dexheim. The warehouse will provide 20,000 square feet of storage for 1st Armored Division equipment and supplies.

The 38th Engr. Co., a medium girder-bridge unit, had the cranes, but how could they get them from their headquarters in Hanau to Dexheim with only a few days notice?

The Solution:

The 502nd Engr. Co., an assault float-bridge company, could move the cranes by water. Each crane was loaded onto a raft made from three interior bridge bays and two ramp bays. The rafts were pulled and guided by two bridge-erection boats with two additional boats as escorts.

The trip took the rafts down the Main River, past Frankfurt and into the Rhein River, then continued south, up the Rhein, to Dexheim. Along the way, the crews navigated a river system filled with barge traffic, five locks and more than a dozen bridges — good training by any measure. □

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Soldiers from the 502nd Engineer Company load a 40-ton crane onto a raft made from three interior bridge bays and two ramp bays. The crane belongs to the 38th Engr. Co. and was used to assist the 94th Engr. Battalion in a construction project 48 miles away.



The two cranes — seen here about to be moved out of one of five locks on the route from Hanau to Dexheim — were used to lift the primary steel structure members for a warehouse roof.

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Teamwork made it happen.



Once back on the open river the crane-bearing rafts and their escorting bridge-erection boats resumed the journey to Dexheim.